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The Tower of Babel Built by Ancient Mexicans?

Why Science Now Believes That the Mysterious Mayas of Yucatan Came from Ancient Babylon After the "Confusion of Tongues"

addition to this there is other evidence that the Mayas came from somewhere in Asia.

The Tower of Babel was the largest one of many a similar structure of pyramidal shape in Babylon, which were crowned with temples. But where the ancient Assyrians constructed scores of such terraced towers, the Mayas built thousands, many of them of huge size and of substantially the same pattern—likewise upholding temples on their platform summits.

According to the Maya legend, Xelhu, one of the seven giants who survived the Deluge, erected a pyramidal tower of enormous height for the purpose of storming Heaven. But the offended gods destroyed it with lightnings and confounded the languages of the builders.

This evidently gives strong confirmation to the theory that the prehistoric inhabitants of Yucatan brought the tradition of the tower and the story of the Flood with them from Assyria.

Certainly nobody anywhere else in the world, save the ancient Assyrians and Babylonians, ever built temple-covered towers like those found to-day in ruins all over Yucatan. While pursuing the same architectural method, the Mayas far outdid the Babylonians in pyramid building. Sometimes they shaped and terraced whole hills to serve as supports for temples or groups of shrines, adding courses of stone in such a way as to give increased height and symmetry. The temple at the top usually had a special enclosure, which was the place of sacrifice, where human victims were offered up.

The pyramids of Yucatan are square or rectangular in shape. Some are nearly 100 feet high, and the largest is over 500 feet square. They have sloping sides, some nearly vertical, and many rise in steps. Faced with stone dressed smooth or plastered, and embellished with sculptures, they are ascended by steep stairways

on one or more sides. The interior mass is of earth and stones, or of stones and mortar. In some cases the slopes were filled in to a smooth slant.

The loftiest is the pyramid of El Castillo, or The Castle, at Chichen-Itza, which is of the stepped type. The largest and most imposing is the so-called Governor's Palace, at Uxmal, which stands on a natural elevation artificially heightened by stone blocks and rising in three terraces. It is considered by ethnologists the most important prehistoric structure in America. The building, 320 feet long, 40 feet deep and 26 feet high, is covered with a marvellous elaboration of sculpture, one belt of which, 10 feet wide, running entirely around the palace, contains 20,000 stones, nearly every one of them a separate work of art.

Nobody knows for what purpose this wonderful building was used, but it seems to have been erected merely as one side of a contemplated quadrangular edifice. As for El Castillo, it was a pyramid temple of the first order. The square pyramid is 80 feet high, 200 feet square at the base, and 60 feet square at the top. The stepped sides rise at an angle of 50 degrees; the platform at the top is reached by four stairways, and the surface was evened with plaster and finished with color. Each stairway had ninety-two steps, which were guarded by balustrades in the form of huge sculptured serpents, whose heads and protruding tongues rested upon the ground while their bodies and tails extended upward to the top of the pyramid.

Babel was a name of Babylon. In the Book of Genesis, eleventh chapter, will be found the story of how the survivors of mankind after the Deluge travelled from the mountain where the Ark rested and settled in the valley of Shinar. There they built a city, and finally attempted to construct a tower whose top should reach Heaven. Yahweh in his abode on high, became angered and said: "Let us go down and confound their language." Then the Babylonians were scattered abroad over all the face of the earth. "And (as Genesis says) 'they left off building the city.' Thus the diversity of human speech and dispersion of mankind were explained.

The tower of Babel was a small affair in height compared with a modern "sky-scraper." It was only about 140 feet high, but the dwellers of the Assyrian plain, where there were no lofty objects for comparison, it seemed to touch the heavens. Standing on a high artificial terrace, like other important Babylonian edifices, it was further upheld by a second platform of earth 600 feet square. Thus its total height above the ground level may have been something like 250 feet.

It was a pyramid of seven steps, sacred to Marduk, the great god of Babylon. The first story was 272 feet square, faced with glazed brick and painted black in honor of Saturn. To Jupiter the second story was dedicated, and the color belonging to the god being orange, it was of that tint—220 feet on a side. The color of the third story was red, in compliment to Mars; each of its sides 184 feet. The fourth story was 148 feet square, and was covered with thick plates of gold, being dedicated to the sun. White was the hue of the fifth story, out of respect for Venus, and it was 122 feet square. The sixth story

was blue, Mercury's color, and each of its sides measured 70 feet. A cube of 15 feet formed the seventh story, and was covered with plates of silver, in honor of the moon.

Marduk was the god of Light. In the beginning of things he battled with the dragon of Chaos; and, to effect the capture of that frightful creature he fastened a gigantic net to the four corners of creation—north, south, east and west. Then he pierced the heart of the dragon with his lance and cut the beast in two. Of one half he made the roof of Heaven, and of the other half made the earth. Heaven he inlaid with the sun, moon and stars, and the Earth he covered with plants and animals. Finally, he made the first man and woman out of clay and celestial blood.

The Babylonians divided history into two great periods—before the Flood and after. Theirs was a land of floods—low and bordering on great rivers flowing into the sea. Just what happened to it on the occasion of the storied Deluge, may be known pretty well by a cent occurrence of the same kind, so short a time ago as the year 1878.

In that year a tornado gathered in the Bay of Bengal and, amid the crash of thunder and violence so terrific as to dismast ships, distant nearly 200 miles, approached the delta of the Ganges, met the ebbing tide and engulfing it in its own huge tidal wave, hurled an ocean of water over 141 square leagues to a depth of forty-five feet, drowning 215,000 human beings, and losing its strength only when it broke against the foothills of the mountains far beyond.

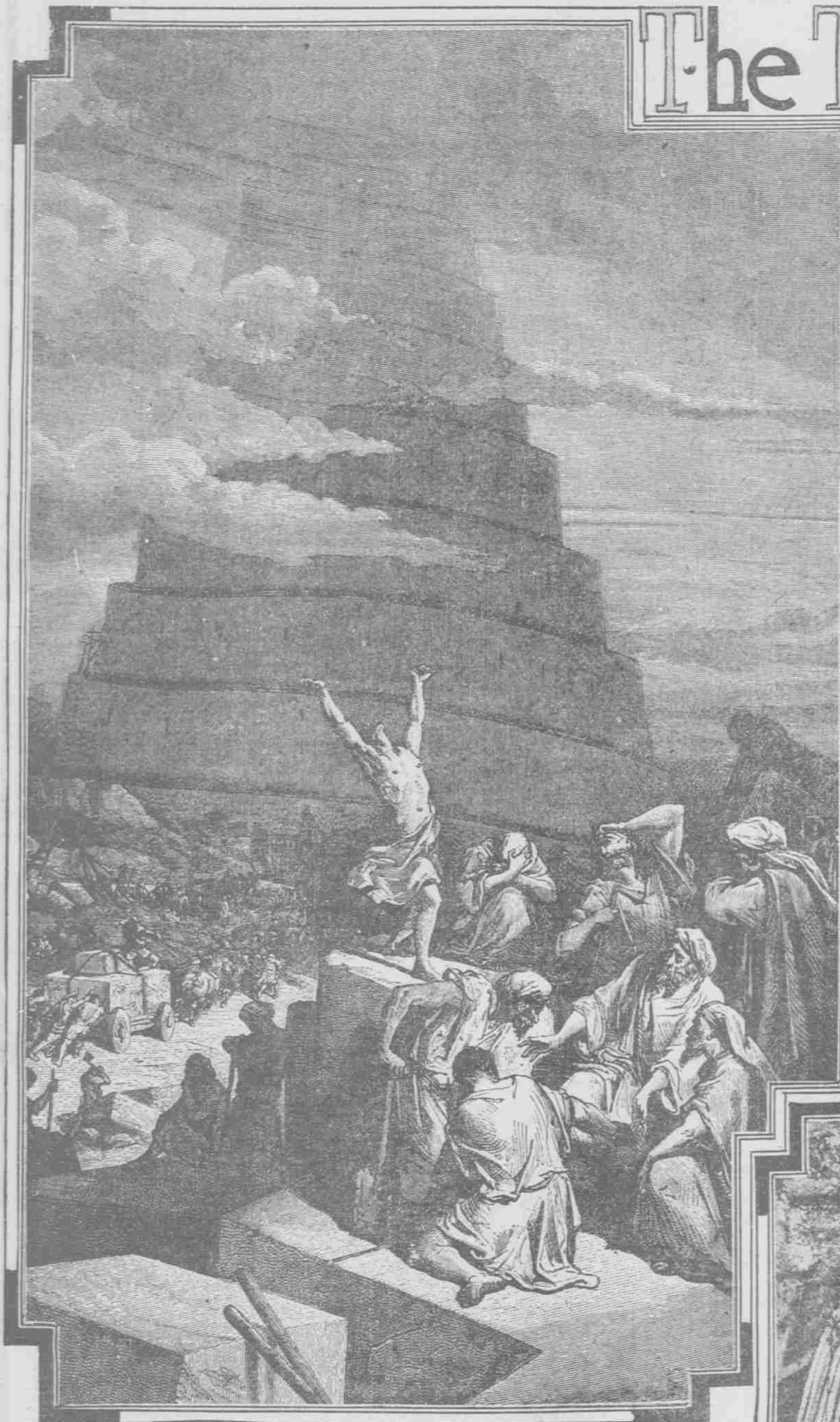
A book found in the library of Sardanapalus, at Nineveh, written on clay tablets, about 2,000 B. C., gives a description of the Deluge which closely corresponds to the above. The sea plays the principal part in it, and the Ark is cast back upon a spur of mountain.

Noah in this case is called Xisuthros, and is stated to have received from the god of the waters deep a command to build a ship of a certain pattern and dimensions, to coat it with pitch, and to put his family aboard, with the "seeds of all living things." He enters the vessel, closes the door, and the craft goes adrift on the waves. On the seventh day he releases a dove, which, flying thither and yon, and finding no resting place, returns. Then a swallow is sent forth, with like result, and finally a raven, which does not come back. Xisuthros thereupon abandons the vessel and offers sacrifices on the summit of the mountain.

It is easy to understand that this story must have travelled to Canaan long before the Israelites settled in that country. Canaan was a Babylonian domain; and we find Hezekiah, the Jewish King, paying tribute to the Assyrian monarch Sennacherib (II Kings, xviii, 14), at a town called Lachish, in southern Palestine. Curiously enough, a sculptured bas-relief on Sargon's palace in Nineveh, which has been dug up, shows Hezekiah in the act of doing this very thing, Sennacherib being enthroned before a tent. An accompanying inscription in uniform characters identifies the personages concerned.

The question still remains, from what source did the prehistoric Mayas of Yucatan obtain their ideas for the construction of temple-crowned pyramids? Inasmuch as these people certainly did not originate in America, they must have brought their notions of architecture from somewhere else. There are many well known reasons for believing they were Asiatic by origin. Such being the case, this close similarity of their pyramids to those of ancient Babylon would seem obviously to indicate Assyria as the earlier home of their race. Furthermore, they had, and their descendants to-day still possess, traditions of a Deluge and a Tower of Babel—the story of which being substantially the same as that which has come down to us in the Bible.

The Pyramid Tower of the Sun at Teotihuacan, Mexico, Showing Its Extraordinary Resemblance to the Tower of Babel and Other Similar Buildings in Babylonia, as Reconstructed from Their Ruins.



"The Confusion of Tongues."

Dore's Conception of the Curious Sky-Scraper Tower of Babel, Whose Destruction Is Recorded in the Eleventh Chapter of Genesis. It is a Type of Many Babylonian Buildings.

By Rene Bache

THE towers and pyramids built by the Mayas, the ancient civilized inhabitants of Mexico, who flourished before the Aztecs, are the greatest wonders of antiquity in America.

An interesting theory, now strongly held by scientists and scholars of the Smithsonian Institution, is that the Mayas are descended from the ancient people of Babylon who were dispersed over the face

of the earth after the capture of that famous city by Cyrus.

If this be so, then the ancient Mayas built the Tower of Babel of the Bible, and those early inhabitants of the earth were in a sense Americans. This view is confirmed in a great degree by the extraordinary resemblance between the ruined towers and pyramids of Babylonia and those built by the Mayas in Yucatan. In

This Sculptured King on a Mayan Temple at Chichen-Itza, Yucatan, Resembles in Detail the Sculptured Kings on the Temple of Nebuchadnezzar at Babylon.



Why Men Should Wear Kimonos.

By Mrs. Aimee Crocker Gouraud
(Who Gives Such Extraordinary Parties.)

AMERICAN men are taking more interest in clothes than they have ever done before, and as they study the subject they are becoming converted to Oriental styles of dressing.

If men would adopt Turkish or Indian, Japanese or Chinese costume, they would be stronger and healthier, would live longer, enjoy life more and be handsomer.

The Japanese dress, comfortable and hygienic as it is, is better adapted to the needs of American men than any other form of Oriental costume. Kimonos can be bought in dark colors and in strong, serviceable stuffs. There need be little or no embroidery on them, if it is not desired. A kimono can be made to follow the taste of the wearer. One of heavy black crepe or lustrous silk, for instance, is as modest a garb for office wear as any man of quiet tastes might wish.

But it would have the advantage over his usual garments of being of

light weight, and for that reason would conserve part of the vital force he gives out every day in his business. The business man yields so much of his force in his work that an ounce of it saved may be many dollars gained.

Aesthetically there is no comparison between the present-day and the Oriental costumes for men. American men wear no uglier clothes than the men of any other Anglo-Saxon nation, but they are all ugly. If the bifurcated garments are necessary, they may at least be hidden by a graceful outer covering. The long, graceful lines of the kimono appeal to the eye, as the straight silhouette of women's garments in the present modes charms it. There is the advantage, too, of banishing the flamboyant waistcoat that pains the eye, and the stupid "to match" one that tires it.

Of course, questions will arise about its utility. I have often been asked whether such garments will withstand the cold weather. I answer, "Yes, if you wear plenty of them." In Japan, when the temperature drops, they simply put on one more kimono. Sometimes they wear four. In extreme weather five or six may be worn.

Objection may be raised about the usefulness of such garments in a

high wind. The Flatiron Building may be passed without embarrassment by the kimono-wearing man. You see, the garment is too narrow to flap about. A woman has no fear of the wind when she wears a hobbie skirt. So it is with the narrow kimono. Besides, the hem of the covering garment is stuffed with cotton to make it heavy. It is a much more useful device than sewing metal weights in women's skirts.

If a man have a liking for brilliant colors, he can gratify it in the red fez and magnificent robes of Turkey. Or he may imitate the rolled head-dress and the embroidered coat of the Indian prince or rajah.

But the Japanese costume is most practicable for all occasions. A man may wear a black or brown kimono to business. Returning to his home he could toss it off and put on a blue or red silk one, embroidered in gold. This would be appropriate also for the ball or opera.

And he would have the gratification that the knowledge of looking his best always brings. A plain man who has taken off his coat and put on a blue or rose colored Mandarin becomes handsome. An insipid looking man acquires individuality.

